



NEWS RELEASE

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**INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE INVESTIGATION RESULTS IN CHARGES AGAINST
ALASKAN BIG GAME GUIDE AND CANADIAN CLIENTS FOR
WILDLIFE CRIMES**

Anchorage, Alaska- Acting U.S. Attorney Kevin Feldis announced today that a joint United States and Canadian wildlife investigation has resulted in the filing of charges by the federal grand jury in Anchorage, Alaska, against an Alaskan big game guide, and three Canadian citizens.

The indictment by the grand jury charges John Katzeek, 64, of Haines, Alaska, who is employed as a big game guide in Alaska, with nine counts including conspiracy, the filing of false documents concealing the illegal nature of the guided hunts, take of wildlife, and smuggling. Also charged with Katzeek for conspiracy and filing false documents were Alberta, Canada, residents Brian Hicken, 54, Kenneth Cox, 49, and Tyler Antal, 22.

The guided hunts and the violations during these hunts occurred between October 2010 and November 2011, in the Haines, Alaska area. The indictment charges the unlawful take and transportation of Mountain goats in violation of numerous Alaska laws and the illegal export of the horns and hides from these goats to Canada by Katzeek, Cox, Hicken and Antal, all in violation of the federal Lacey Act.

The indictment also charges that Katzeek participated in the illegal import of trophy Dall sheep from Yukon, Canada into the United States. The indictment alleges that during December 2008 and through March 2009, Katzeek conspired with another individual to illegally import a trophy Dall sheep ram using false documents, and smuggling the sheep horns from Canada into the United States. During 2010, Katzeek personally imported a second trophy Dall sheep using false documents to facilitate the export of the horns from Canada into the United States.

The indictment is the result of an extensive joint United States and Canadian investigation. Starting in January 2013, Canada Crown prosecutors in Alberta, and Yukon Territory Canada, charged approximately 17 subjects with 55 violations under Wild Animal and Plant Protection and the Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act (WAPPIITA). These charges were in relation to the illegal guided hunts charged above and the illegal import of unlawful wildlife from the United States into Canada. The Canadian trials are scheduled to begin in the fall of 2013.

The maximum penalty for conspiracy and violating the Lacey Act is 5 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. The maximum penalty for smuggling is 30 years in prison with a \$250,000 fine. An arraignment date has not been set.

Mr. Feldis commends the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Wildlife Troopers, Environment Canada, Yukon Conservation Officer Service, Alberta Fish and Game, Parks Canada, British Columbia Conservation Officer Service, and the Public Prosecution Service of Canada for the international cooperation extended in the investigation of these cases.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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